



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Volunteer Coordinator's Procedures Manual

***Volunteer Services
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**Tennessee Department of Children's Services
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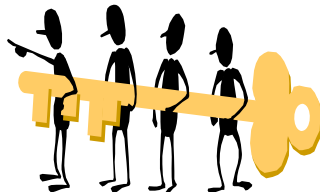
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Introduction

Why use volunteers?

The use of community volunteer programs and citizen involvement councils will increase both the quality and quantity of all DCS services and programs. It is essential that volunteers be involved in DCS services and programs to provide additional resources, enhance programs and help provide timely, and appropriate services for children/youth in state custody and at risk of custody so these children/youth can reach their full potential as productive competent and healthy adults.

Volunteers bring with them a wide range of talents and interests that can be used in a DCS volunteer program. While working, they learn about the Department of Children's Services goals and objectives and may become an important liaison within the community to help children/youth reach their goals.



Volunteers may perform services in any area of the program where there are identified needs. Although volunteers will not supplant DCS staff in taking primary responsibility for providing essential direct-service or management responsibilities, they can augment existing programs and contribute to mentoring, recreation, counseling, tutoring and other programs. The success of volunteer involvement will depend directly upon: the willingness to integrate volunteers into the operations of DCS programs; the removal of barriers to involvement; and the rewards provided for their services. Volunteers, “people helping people,” gain satisfaction for their efforts.

The potential roles for volunteers in this agency are limitless. Initially, it will take time to plan for and manage volunteers, but the time spent in the beginning is an investment toward keeping volunteers interested and involved.

The Volunteer Coordinator

Each DCS facility administrator/regional administrator will appoint a staff member designated as the “Volunteer Coordinator” to manage and oversee the recruitment of volunteers and monitor the implementation of the program. The staff member's job performance plan must reflect responsibility and accountability for the volunteer program.

The volunteer coordinator will be responsible for:

1. Planning volunteer positions and activities
2. Recruiting volunteers
3. Interviewing and screening potential volunteers
4. Orientation and training of volunteers
5. Maintaining volunteer records
6. Act as liaison between the community, staff and volunteers and children/youth

The volunteer coordinator will be responsible for assigning volunteers to staff, monitoring the assignments, and must be available to volunteers and staff to answer questions and hear suggestions or problems that the volunteer or staff may be experiencing.

Definitions of Volunteers

A. In-Service Volunteers

An in-service volunteer is any individual participating directly in the operation of DCS facilities and programs under the supervision of paid DCS staff and who may have direct contact with children/youth.

1. **Regular in-service volunteer**—An individual whose service to the agency is regularly (more than three times per year) provided and whose commitment is depended upon for the provision of services (i.e., clerical volunteer, case manager).
2. **Occasional in-service volunteer** – Any individual or group whose services to the facility occurs temporarily or irregularly (three times or less per year) and under supervision of a volunteer or staff member (i.e., visiting church groups, entertainment, participants in sporting events).

B. Support Volunteers

A support volunteer is any individual or group providing indirect service or assistance to DCS facilities or programs without actual contact with children/youth, programs or operations. Their responsibilities fall into the advisory or consulting category, and direct supervision is not required for the accomplishment of their duties.

C. Interns

College students participating in internship programs with local colleges and universities will be supervised according to the Department of Children's Services policy **8.1, Department of Children's Services Volunteer Services Program** and the sponsoring college or university guidelines.

Qualifications of Volunteers

Any person, who is 18 years of age, may provide positive support and encouragement for DCS children/youth. Volunteers that are needed to work directly with children/youth must be representative of all social, economic and educational levels and possess skills and personal qualities adequately to fulfill the volunteer assignment.

Relatives of children/youth must not serve as a volunteer in a facility or program where an immediate relative is housed or located. Immediate relatives are defined as parents, siblings, in-laws, aunts, uncles or grandparents.

Department of Children's Services employees cannot serve as a volunteer at their job site.

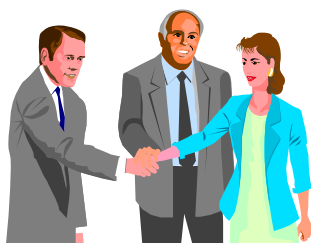
Volunteer Needs Assessment

The volunteer coordinator should assess the facility or program volunteer needs on a quarterly basis. This can be achieved by:

- A. A memorandum to all employees advising them of the availability of volunteers and surveying staff needs for volunteers.
- B. Meeting with staff, administration and when appropriate, the children/youth to discuss the volunteer program.

Recruitment

The volunteer coordinator is responsible for recruitment of volunteers as determined by the quarterly needs assessment or upon request by staff.



The recruitment of volunteers will begin only after specific needs have been identified and will be for specific jobs reflected in detailed job descriptions. Qualified volunteers will be recruited from all cultural and socioeconomic segments of the community to fill designated volunteer positions.

Word-of-mouth is the best recruitment tool that exists. Talk to groups and clubs; attend meetings. Visibility in the community makes people aware of Department of Children's Services facilities/programs and their needs. After some volunteers have been recruited, they will become the voice for a DCS facility/program.

Volunteers who like what they are doing are the best advertisement of volunteer services. Their enthusiasm may spread spontaneously or may be directed specifically to reach friends who may be interested in

volunteering. Whether in a one-to-one conversation, over the telephone to a friend, getting together in a social situation or in a speech to a group, there is no substitute for personal contact between recruiters and potential volunteers.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Prior to assigning a volunteer position, the volunteer coordinator must develop a job description using form **CS-0551, Volunteer Job Description**. The job description will specifically define:

1. Job Title
2. Contact Person (Person supervising volunteer)
3. Job objective
4. Job activities (Duties to be performed)
5. Time required
6. Training required
7. Qualifications

When selecting areas where volunteers are needed, volunteers like to feel they are making a contribution and want interesting jobs. To ensure a long-term involvement on the volunteer's part, do not give the volunteer a trivial or meaningless task. Keep in mind that the volunteer's reward is not monetary but lies in job satisfaction.

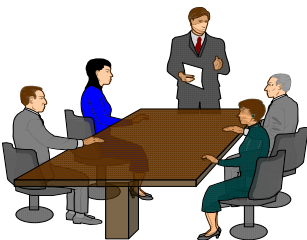
The volunteer coordinator will review the job description with the volunteer and obtain their signature on the job description during orientation. The volunteer should receive a copy of the job description and the original must be maintained in the volunteer file.

Interviewing the Volunteer

Once the initial contact has been made with a prospective volunteer, the volunteer coordinator will conduct a formal screening interview.

The interview will serve to accomplish the following:

1. Collect information pertaining to the volunteer's interests and motivation for wanting to volunteer with the Department of Children's Services;



2. Determine the amount of time that the volunteer is available;
3. Discuss available positions;
4. Document certification or licensing; (volunteers may perform professional services only when they are licensed or certified to do so)
5. Determine the suitability of the potential volunteer for the position.

The date of the interview will be documented on the volunteer application. All applicants must be notified in writing by the volunteer coordinator of their acceptance or rejection as a volunteer.

Volunteer Applications

Regular Volunteer

Before being considered for a position, the prospective volunteer must complete a ***Volunteer Application (CS-0319)*** and the confidentiality form (***CS-0322, Proof of Training/ Confidentiality/Volunteer Policy Agreement***). The application provides information and background material necessary to determine qualifications for service to the DCS facility or program. The volunteer application is the initial screening tool and all questions should be answered completely by the volunteer.

Occasional Volunteer

The group leader of any group planning to present a one-time event at a DCS facility or program must meet with the volunteer coordinator at least thirty (30) days prior to the event. The group leader must be required to submit a list of all participants to the volunteer coordinator at least three (3) working days prior to the event. The list must include:

1. Name of participants
2. Complete street address
3. City, State and Zip
4. Contact phone numbers (work and/or home) with area codes
5. Drivers license number or other identification

Background Investigations

The volunteer coordinator must complete a thorough background investigation prior to approval and placement of each prospective volunteer. The background investigation must be completed within thirty

(30) calendar days from the date the application is received. The minimum requirements for a background investigation includes:

1. Fingerprint check
2. A local criminal record check
3. Sex offender registry check
4. Verification of present employment
5. At least two (2) reference checks- (in writing or via telephone)

The volunteer coordinator must document the results of the background investigations on the volunteer application.

Provisional Approval

1. Provisional approval of all volunteers may be granted prior to receiving the fingerprint investigation results. Guidelines for provisional approval are listed below:
 - A. The prospective volunteer must have a five-year history of residing in their present community.
 - B. A criminal record check of the last 5 years must be completed.
 - C. Present employment must be verified.
 - D. All reference checks must be completed and verified
 - E. The approved volunteer must be certified by the State of Tennessee, Division of Claims prior to performing services for the Department.
2. The regional administrator or facility administrator may grant provisional approval if all of the above has been completed and no criminal record is discovered.
3. Volunteers receiving provisional approval will be issued only in situations where their activities are supervised by DCS staff.
4. Provisional approval will be granted up to a period of 90 days and may be renewed at the end of 90 days until the results of finger print checks are received.

Tuberculosis Screening

Volunteers who regularly serve at a DCS Youth Development Center one or more times per week and have routine contact with youth must be screened for tuberculosis prior to service and annually thereafter. Volunteers shall present to the designated volunteer coordinator, or designee their evidence of freedom

from infectious tuberculosis prior to service and annually thereafter. Youth development center volunteers will receive the TB screening at the youth development center medical facility. (See DCS Policy [20.53, Tuberculosis Control In DCS Treatment Facilities](#).)

Volunteers for the DCS group homes and regional offices will go to their local health department for TB screening.

If the volunteer chooses a private physician, they must bring a written statement from the physician stating they have been tested or examined and found to be free of infectious tuberculosis. Cost of testing by a private physician shall be borne by the volunteer.

Certification

Upon completion of background investigations and approval of a new volunteer, the volunteer coordinator must submit a photocopy of the approved **Volunteer Application** and the ***Volunteer Certification Letter*** to the Director Of Volunteer Services.

The Director Of Volunteer Services must submit the volunteer's name, date of birth and social security number to the State of Tennessee, Division of Claims for certification.

Placement and Supervision of Volunteers

The volunteer coordinator will be responsible for the placement of volunteers according to identified need. The volunteer coordinator will assign volunteers to DCS staff who will be responsible for direct supervision of the volunteer's activities. DCS staff responsible for the supervision of the volunteer will include that individual in the count of the number of staff that he/she is allowed to supervise:

1. Job specific training
2. Assigning and monitoring duties of the volunteer.
3. Forwarding form CS-0320, *Volunteer Activity Report* to the volunteer coordinator.

The volunteer coordinator must be informed immediately by assigned staff of any problems or situations with supervising the volunteer.

Orientation

The volunteer coordinator must be responsible for conducting orientation and general on-the-job training of all volunteers.

The volunteer orientation includes:

1. An explanation of the program (goals and objectives);
2. An introduction to staff (persons who will be supervising the volunteers should attend);
3. An introduction to the DCS facility's/programs (tour, population, etc.);
4. An overview of the Department of Children's Services including types and locations of programs;
5. A discussion of the volunteer's role (explain what the volunteer will be doing and who or what will benefit);
6. To whom the volunteer is responsible (who is the immediate supervisor and where he/she is located);
7. Guidelines governing volunteers (DCS policies on confidentiality, sexual harassment, personnel policies, safety and security issues, reporting child abuse, medical guidelines, etc.)

Upon completion of orientation and training, the volunteer must sign form ***CS-0322, Proof of Training/Confidentiality/Volunteer Policy Agreement***. This form will be maintained in the volunteer's permanent file.

On-The-Job-Training

The DCS staff assigned to supervise the volunteer must be responsible for providing all job-specific training. Job specific training will also include a review and explanation of all appropriate policies and procedures.

Identification Badges

I.D. badges will be issued to volunteers working at DCS locations where I.D. badges are required for DCS staff. I.D. badges may be issued to volunteers at other locations if it is necessary or useful in the performance of their assigned duties.

In DCS youth development centers, all volunteer I.D. badges must be available and controlled through a central location. Each DCS youth development center is accountable for its badges. Badges are the permanent property of the youth development center, and must not be removed from the premises.

Upon arrival at the youth development center, the volunteer must provide a photo I.D. (i.e., driver's license) for identification. The volunteer will be issued their volunteer badge before entering the facility and upon leaving the facility, must surrender the badge to the security officer.

Liability

While performing duties at the direction of the Department of Children's Services, volunteers are considered to be employees of the State of Tennessee and are entitled to the privileges and immunities conveyed therein.

Volunteers, whose services are offered to and received by the Department of Children's Services without consideration of payment, are not covered under the Worker's Compensation Insurance. They are, however, covered by the Tennessee Claims Commission upon registration with the Commission.

Volunteers will be advised during their interview to contact independent insurance sources if extra liability insurance is desired.

Termination of Volunteers

If there is evidence of inappropriate conduct or negligence on behalf of the volunteer, the assigned staff supervising the volunteer must contact the volunteer coordinator regarding the situation. The volunteer coordinator must contact the regional administrator or facility administrator and at their request, conduct a full investigation and report the results back to them.

If allegations of child abuse or neglect involving the volunteer arise, the volunteer coordinator must contact the appropriate regional administrator or facility administrator and a referral must be made immediately to DCS Central Intake for a possible investigation.

Volunteer Files

A volunteer file must be maintained on each active volunteer by the volunteer coordinator. The file will include:



1. The volunteer application
2. Reference letters
3. Training documents
4. Background investigation results
5. Job description
6. Confidentiality form
7. Substitute W-9 form, if needed

8. Correspondence
9. Monthly hours
10. Volunteer Certification Letter
11. Volunteer Approval or Rejection Letter
12. Letter of termination, if issued

Files must be closed if the volunteer has not been active for six (6) consecutive months. Inactive files should be maintained for one (1) year and then destroyed. The file for any volunteer who has been dismissed or denied from service should be archived.

Information and files pertaining to an individual volunteer or to a group of volunteers will be maintained according to all applicable DCS and State of Tennessee policies and procedures governing files and records.

Volunteer Coordinator Monthly Report

Each volunteer coordinator is responsible for developing a system for the collection of the volunteer activity report on a monthly basis and should use the information submitted on the activity reports to compile the monthly activity report.

After completing the monthly report, the forms must be filed in each volunteer's permanent file. A copy of the monthly report must be forwarded to the Director Of Volunteer Services by the 10th of each month.

The monthly report must include:

1. Names and social security numbers of all active volunteers
2. Number of hours of service for each volunteer
3. List of any donations received
4. List of all special events

The volunteer coordinator must maintain a monthly calendar of events. In youth development centers, the volunteer coordinator must provide a copy of the monthly calendar to the Director Of Security prior to the first day of each month. The volunteer coordinator will also provide the Director Of Security with a list of active volunteers. For other DCS offices and programs, copies must be provided to the supervisor or administrative management of the office or program.

Program Maintenance

The volunteer program maintenance is directly related to the success of the program and whether volunteers can be retained or chooses to drop out. The volunteer coordinator has the responsibility to see that the program is working toward the desired goals, and help to make the process a positive experience for staff and volunteers.

Assessment and Evaluation

The volunteer program will be assessed and evaluated regularly to ensure that volunteers are receiving adequate support and that the program is promoting positive outcomes for children and families.

Citizen Involvement Council

Purpose

The purpose of the Citizen Involvement Council (CIC) is to provide assistance in stimulating positive citizen and community involvement and promoting volunteerism at each DCS facility, program and region throughout the State. Activities of the CIC must comply with the Department of Children's Services rules, regulations, policies, procedures and statutes of the State of Tennessee.

Objectives

1. Work closely with the volunteer coordinators and community resources to coordinate a statewide network of Citizen Involvement Councils (CIC);
2. Advise the Director of Volunteer Services and DCS staff of program and practices that would enhance local involvement with DCS;
3. Make recommendations to DCS concerning pilot programs;
4. Promote collaboration between DCS and institutions of higher learning;
5. Serve as community liaison, informing the community of pertinent information concerning the nature and intent of the programs and enlisting community support.
6. Assist in the development and management of the local volunteer programs;
7. Provide leadership in development of local volunteers and community resources to promote recreational, cultural, religious, social and education activities;
8. Advise the Director of Volunteer Services and DCS staff on matters of public interest and concern;
9. Assist DCS staff in planning and implementing methods of involvement in community activities.

Appointment

Members of the CIC will be appointed by either the Commissioner/designee, Youth Development Center (YDC) Superintendent, DCS Group Home Director or Regional Director. Subsequent vacancies will be filled by the CIC members with the approval of the Commissioner/designee, YDC Superintendent, DCS Group Home Director or Regional Executive Director.

Qualifications

Each member must:

- ◆ Be at least eighteen (18) years of age;
- ◆ Have service as a volunteer in a Juvenile Justice system, Criminal Justice system, or Child Welfare system;
- ◆ Be in good standing in the community and
- ◆ Be willing to be actively involved in the support of children, youth and DCS staff

No member of a CIC will be a paid employee of DCS.

Term of Office

Members of the CIC will serve for two (2) years.

Training

Each CIC member will receive orientation to specific DCS programs, regional offices, juvenile justice system and programs or DCS facilities and offices, in addition to training for the role of CIC member.

Responsibilities

Each CIC member will attend regularly scheduled and specially called meetings, work closely with the DCS volunteer coordinator, maintain confidentiality of individual children, youth and families and develop community resources.

Duties and Authority

Each CIC may organize as a nonprofit corporation under Tennessee laws. CIC must have access to the Commissioner/designee, YDC Superintendent, DCS Group Home Director, Regional Administrators or Regional Executive Directors.

Compensation

Members of CIC will be reimbursed for travel according to the rules and regulations established by the State of Tennessee, Department of Finance and Administration, Comprehensive Travel Regulations.